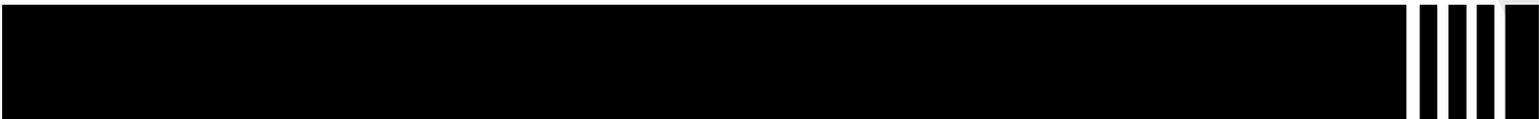




SEND Strategy



SEND Strategy

Dear Surrey residents and partners,

We are seeking your views on a Surrey strategy to strengthen education for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

This consultation is about inclusion, and ensuring children with SEND can get a good education at a school close to their home; it is not about closing specialist schools or moving children from their current school.

We spend much more than other, similar local authorities, and yet a significant number of children, young people and their families tell us they are often disappointed with the support they receive and experience poor outcomes in the things that matter to them at the end of their special education provision: independence, an active social life and work-readiness.

The majority of Surrey's mainstream and special schools provide a good education for our children and young people with SEND and we want to extend this high quality education even further. It is important that we continually improve our services but also make sure that we can adapt to the growth in the number of children with learning and additional needs.

We are asking you to feed back on what you see as priorities for improvement, which will give us a better understanding of where you feel our resources are best spent. We want everyone to get involved with a commitment to partnership working to ensure that all children and young people with SEND have access to good quality education within Surrey.

We invite you to read this SEND strategy and complete the SEND consultation questionnaire, which is available online at surreycc.gov.uk/consultations. Some printed copies will also be available at children's centres and libraries, or you can request a copy by calling 03456 009009 or by texting 07860 053465.

Alongside this we will be engaging with partners and other interested groups.

The consultation closes on Monday 4 January 2019.

With sincere thanks

Dave Hill
Executive Director for Children, Families and Learning
Surrey County Council

Our plan for the future

Over the spring and summer of 2018 we engaged with residents, communities and partners across our county to understand what Surrey should look like in 2030 and the challenges we face. Informed by the conversations we had, we have been able to develop with partners and residents a shared vision for Surrey.

We are now on an exciting journey of transforming our services so we can deliver our 2030 ambitions that we have committed to in the vision.

Our vision for Surrey 2030

By 2030 we want Surrey to be a uniquely special place where everyone has a great start to life, people live healthy and fulfilling lives, are enabled to achieve their full potential and contribute to their community, and no one is left behind.

We want our county's economy to be strong, vibrant and successful and Surrey to be a great place to live, work and learn. A place that capitalises on its location and natural assets, and where communities feel supported and people are able to support each other.

Our ambitions for people are:

- Children and young people are safe and feel safe and confident
- Everyone benefits from education, skills and employment opportunities that help them succeed in life
- Everyone lives healthy, active and fulfilling lives, and makes good choices about their wellbeing
- Everyone gets the health and social care support and information they need at the right time and place
- Communities are welcoming and supportive, especially of those most in need, and people feel able to contribute to community life

We have a key role in supporting children, young people and families to thrive. We aim to provide good and outstanding services to children and their families in need of help and support, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

We want to make sure that every child growing up in Surrey has the best possible start in life and that children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities should be able to live, learn and grow up locally. We also need to ensure that this provision is cost-effective, fair across the range of children and young people's differing needs and sufficient when taking into account predicted future rising levels of need.

We recognise that SEND impacts the whole family, including parents, carers and siblings, and that the whole family is key to supporting the child or young person with SEND and helping them to reach their potential. We therefore need to take a collective approach to ensure that support is in place to address not only the needs of the child or young person with SEND, but also their family.

What young people and their families have told us

Young people in Surrey have told us that they would like earlier intervention at schools and help when they go to college. They would also like more support for emotional health and wellbeing, to develop their independence, maintain an active social life and have opportunities to work and contribute to their community.

Families have told us that they have to wait a long time to access services, and this can make things worse. They feel that problems are not identified early enough and that there is not enough support or provision for lower level needs, and that thresholds are too high. Families have said that they have to wait a long time to access services, which can lead to a lack of trust. Families have also said that they feel some providers are not knowledgeable about their needs and that they want to be engaged in the design and management of services that their children receive. Families also don't feel they have a choice of provision and haven't had a clear explanation about why decisions have been made.

Overall, young people and families have told us they would like:

- To be able to get help early before situations get worse and to know what is on offer;
- To be contacted when things are going well, not just when there's a problem;
- Opportunities to share experiences and learn from each other and help each other using social media;
- Young people's feedback to be used to design services that are for them;
- Services to be more accessible, easy to find and get to;
- To be informed and made aware of changes that affect them.

We will continue to gather views through the consultation process and develop our understanding of the impact of the proposed SEND strategy.

The SEND consultation questionnaire asks you to consider what young people and SEND families have told us and whether you agree or disagree with a number of statements.

What SEND inspectors have told us

The local area of Surrey was inspected by OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission in October 2016 to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the SEND reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. The Chief Inspector determined that the local authority and the area's clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) were required to submit a Written Statement of Action because of significant areas of weakness in the local area's practice. The key areas of weakness to be addressed were:

- The timeliness, suitability and quality of statutory assessments and plans, including when statements are transferred to education, health and care plans.
- The under-developed and often limited involvement of parents and carers, and the narrow range of those included, in planning, monitoring and evaluating services. The ineffective promotion of the local offer, and the incomplete statutory transition plan.
- The inefficient management and coordination of area information, in administrative processes, to inform evaluation of services and outcomes, and to hold leaders and staff at all levels to account for rapid improvement.
- The relatively low identification of need at school support level, indicating inefficiencies in the early identification of special educational needs and/or disabilities.

- The increasing rates of absence and exclusion experienced by children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in mainstream schools.

Since then, we have had regular monitoring visits from the Department for Education and NHS England. While we received acknowledgement that some improvements have been made, we know that there is much more to be done to achieve the further improvements needed.

Developing a SEND Strategy

In order to improve outcomes for children and achieve financial sustainability, we have developed a strategy which sets out proposals based on supporting children and young people with SEND at an earlier stage.

The strategy is based on five key principles:

1. Children with special educational needs are identified earlier and supported in a timely and effective way in order to improve their outcomes and wellbeing.
2. There is an increased focus on earlier intervention and prevention to offer help and meet needs at the earliest opportunity, reducing the demand on high cost, high need interventions.
3. Children and young people are helped to become resilient and independent so that they can lead independent and fulfilling lives in their own communities.
4. The voices of our children, young people and families are heard so they can shape and inform how we work together to get the best results.
5. Surrey's early years settings, schools, colleges and other providers are able to support children to live, learn and grow up locally and achieve their full potential.

The SEND consultation questionnaire asks you to think about these five principles and say how far you agree or disagree with a number of statements about them.

Where are we now?

In Surrey maintained schools there are approximately 200,000 pupils in total. Of these children and young people there are around 23,000 receiving special educational needs (SEN) support in an educational setting.

Surrey maintains education, health and care plans (EHCPs) for 8,600 pupils (as of October 2018). EHCPs replaced the statementing process in 2014 and are statutory plans.

Too many children are only accessing the support they need by getting an EHCP. The number of EHCPs has increased by nearly 40% since the new SEND Code of Practice was introduced in September 2014. There has also been a significant increase in the identification of children and young people with autism, with the number of children with an EHCP and a primary need of autism almost doubling since 2013.

Almost 39% of children and young people in Surrey with an EHCP are placed in a special school and a further 3.5% are educated within a SEN unit within mainstream schools.

Since the implementation of the Children and Families Act 2014 we have seen an increase in the number of 16-25 year olds who have continued into post-16 provision with an EHCP. This

has increased demand for college places and is putting additional pressure on the high needs budget. At age 16 many young people with SEND do not have the same opportunities as other young people to progress to further learning and training and to access employment and independent living as they move into early adulthood. A disproportionate amount of our young people with SEND find themselves 'not in education, training or employment' (NEET) once they leave school, college or university.

This strategy is designed to address these issues. Our vision is to support all educational providers in Surrey to deliver high quality education for children and young people with SEND, maximising value from the funding available.

The SEND Code of Practice states that local authorities must keep their educational and training provision and social care provision under review and this includes the sufficiency of that provision.

Demand for specialist provision

Many special schools maintained by Surrey County Council are currently at maximum capacity and cannot meet the identified future growth in demand without expansion. There is inconsistent use of specialist centres which are based in mainstream schools, with some being over capacity and some having places which are not being filled.

Around 14% of all special school placements are in Non-Maintained and Independent special schools. Surrey has the highest use of Non-Maintained and Independent special schools compared to our statistical neighbours, where the average percentage is almost 9%, and nearly double that of the national average (7.2%).

These placements are meeting a wide range of needs and more recently are being used to fill gaps in our own provision, particularly for those with autism or complex social, emotional and mental health needs. If trends continue as they are we will see up to 350 additional children being placed in this type of placement over two years at significant additional cost.

In January 2018, 38% of children in Non-Maintained and Independent schools (NMIs) were in placements outside of Surrey and 20% were in authorities that do not border Surrey.

For the children with SEND for whom the authority pays for transport, over 400 children have to travel more than 20 kilometres to school and approximately 30 children travel over 40 kilometres to school. This can be very stressful for children and young people and also has an impact on the transport budget for the local authority. In 2017-18 Surrey spent over £26 million transporting and escorting 2,789 children and young people with SEND to school. This is an increase from £20.3 million and 2,572 children in 2012/13.

Simply put, too many children and young people have to go to a school too far from home in order to have their education, health and care needs met. We would like to support the Surrey family of schools to extend their capacity to offer effective provision for these children and young people closer to home. This would mean children and young people achieving their outcomes locally and reducing the challenge to families of having a child educated some way away from home. We want to avoid young people returning home at the end of their education with independence skills that may not be relevant to their local community. In addition, the

young person is likely to lose the social networks that they have built up and may have difficulty establishing new ones.

There were 219 appeals against Surrey in the 2017 calendar year registered by the SEN and Disability Tribunal, 35 of these were appealing against the school named in the Statement or EHCP and 112 were appealing against the contents of the EHCP/Statement (including named school). This indicates that there is a need for greater collaboration between the county council, schools and parents to reach appropriate placement decisions with confidence.

Pupil progress and attainment

The attainment and progress of pupils with SEND shows wide gaps compared to other learners, although the gap is broadly in line with the national picture.

At Key Stage 2 in 2018, the SEND gap continues to be substantial. For pupils achieving the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths combined the attainment gap is 54% for pupils on SEN Support and 67% for pupils with an EHCP. This is compared with 50% and 65% nationally (based on provisional emerging data). Although the gap is wider, a higher proportion of Surrey pupils achieve this level than nationally for both SEN Support and those with EHCPs.

At Key Stage 4, in 2017 pupils with SEND continue to achieve less well. For the Attainment 8 measure the attainment gap is 20.3 points for young people on SEN Support compared with 17.6 points nationally and 36.8 points for pupils with EHCPs compared with 36.4 points nationally.

Exclusions

In 2017/18, 53% of children and young people who were permanently excluded were categorised as having SEND. Just under half of all fixed period exclusions (48%) were received by pupils with SEND. There is also a small, but significant number of children and young people with SEND who are being educated in alternative provision while waiting for their EHCP assessment to be completed or for a specialist placement. Our challenge is for the county council, schools and partners to think differently about how we can put in place support to enable these children and young people to remain within mainstream school placements and how best to support their families to strengthen this arrangement.

National context

The Children and Families Act 2014 was designed to offer simpler, improved and more consistent help for children and young people with SEND. The new system extends the rights and protection to children and young people by introducing education, health and care plans and extending provision from birth to 25 years of age.

The reforms, which came into force in September 2014, require:

- The local authority to develop and publish a Local Offer, and to work closely with the NHS and schools to use resources through joint commissioning to improve the range of support available in a local area.

- A more flexible model of joint commissioning that promotes access to personal budgets, focuses on specific groups of children or areas within the county and ensures that children and young people's needs are met.
- A cultural change in the way in which we listen to and engage with children, young people and their parents and carers.
- Better commissioning of new provision to ensure needs are met in local schools and by local community services.
- Positive transitions at all key stages within a 0-25 age range, especially a more successful transition to adult life.
- Improved quality and range of information available for children, young people and their parents and carers enabling them to make informed choices.

The Act sets out the expectation that children and young people with special educational needs should be included within mainstream schools together with children who do not have special educational needs, so far as is reasonably practicable and is compatible with –

- the child receiving the special educational provision called for by his or her special educational needs
- the provision of efficient education for the children with whom he or she will be educated, and
- the efficient use of resources.

Schools must ensure that they do not discriminate against children and young people with SEND, this includes admission arrangements and the way schools provide education and exclusion practices.

Schools should ensure that pupils with SEND can be involved in every aspect of school life. This may involve changing the way schools teach pupils. Some are more complex and require specialist advice and support to achieve them.

Government funding for SEND has not increased in line with the increases in demand and complexity that we referred to earlier. Any additional funding that has been provided has only been in relation to general population increases and with little recognition of the additional responsibilities that the local authority has taken on with regards to SEND, particularly in relation to young people being able to maintain an EHC plan if they remain in education up until the age of 25 years. However, in Surrey we are placing more children in often higher cost placements in the non-maintained and independent sector also causing inefficiencies in the use of resources, as well as impacting upon children's outcomes. Therefore this strategy seeks to address this imbalance and to utilise resources more effectively over the medium term.

Budget summary

It is anticipated that the benefits of the proposed transformation will take time to be delivered and it is understood that there is a tension between continuing to provide SEND services and the impact of early intervention and support over time.

Therefore the county council is proposing to make investment in two ways:

- Providing additional core funding over the next two years.

- Investment in transformation over two years directly through the SEND Transformation programme and two associated programmes (All Age Learning Disability and Family Resilience).

The county council is looking at how it can increase the funding for SEND for the following financial years. In 2019/20 it is requesting a transfer of 0.5% of the mainstream schools funding (Schools Block Dedicated Schools Grant), which equates to £3.1m.

Since 2016/17 the expenditure in relation to SEND services has been higher than the funding received. In 2018/19 the SEND budget is £172m and this included a 1.3% increase in our grant funding.

What will we do?

We have identified four proposed areas of transformation. These will require consultation and engagement. The proposals are set out below:

1. Early identification and support

In early years, schools and colleges, we will ensure children and young people with additional needs are identified earlier and receive the assessment and support they need when they need it. This means we will:

- Ensure easier access to information, advice and support. Children and families will be supported by professionals who are working as one team and working jointly together to provide the information, advice and help that families and children with additional needs may need.
- Develop a graduated pathway (known as a Graduated Response) with associated guidance and support to ensure children and young people with additional needs receive early support and assessment to prevent escalation to more complex needs. Some children might need to have a specialist assessment and a support plan in place to enable them to progress in their learning. A number of children with complex needs may need a statutory plan to enable them to access individualised support on an ongoing basis. This means that fewer children will require specialist support, which will in turn drive down demand for specialist provision.
- Provide support through Educational Psychology, speech and language therapy and other support at an early stage (pre-statutory) for those who need it, as part of the graduated response.
- Establish an early help behaviour and emotional wellbeing pathway that will support children and young people with mental health needs and/or challenging behaviour and their families both at home and at school. This pathway will be for children and young people whose emotional or other needs may lead to behaviour difficulties. It will work across services to provide early intervention, mental health support and a blended offer of wraparound support as needed. This will also be part of the graduated response.
- Support education settings, including nurseries and schools to implement the graduated response through an implementation team to embed the new ways of working.
- Develop a robust outcomes framework and monitoring tools so that families, education settings and the local authority and partners can see where intervention is working well and where it needs to change. We will base this framework on Preparation for Adulthood to ensure we are supporting young people towards independent and fulfilled lives.

We will also review and promote the local offer.

The SEND consultation questionnaire asks you to think about these plans and say how far you agree or disagree with a number of statements about the proposals.

2. Developing local services and managing the market

We will:

- Increase our specialist school places by providing around 350 additional places over the next two years and making use of available capacity by working with existing schools to extend and adapt their arrangements. This will include additional places that meet the needs of children and young people with autism and social, emotional and mental health needs. This will reduce our reliance on high cost placements further away from home.
- Increase our post-16 and post-19 pathways by creating around 100 additional places and programmes of support over the next two years. We will also work with our post-16 providers and special schools to develop joint arrangements for post-16 provision to create additional capacity and support young people in their preparation for adulthood.
- Create more specialist post-16 employment focused pathways through increasing our adult learning and, employability provision, and expanding our Supported Internship programme, targeting an additional 120 places over four years.
- Develop a long term property strategy for specialist school provision in order to meet the needs of children with SEND.
- Work with specialist education providers and recommission where needed to ensure we are able to support a wider range of children and reduce the number of children and young people with SEND who are out of school or being placed in high cost placements in the non-maintained and independent sector. This will be accompanied by a new funding model to support a graduated pathway.
- Implement an attendance monitoring system in targeted specialist settings to improve safeguarding, gain a clearer picture about attendance and ensure best value for money.
- Implement an ambitious market management strategy in order to achieve efficiencies in the non-maintained and independent sector. This will be supported by a dynamic purchasing system currently being tendered to manage the procurement of placements and achieve better value for money.

The SEND consultation questionnaire asks you to think about these plans and say how far you agree or disagree with a number of statements about the proposals.

3. Partnership working

Working with partners in health, care and education to ensure educational provision is effective, of a high quality and delivers the best educational outcomes for children and young people with SEND. We will:

- Facilitate the creation of local school clusters (taking account of/building on existing arrangements) and special school hubs to support flexible and blended offers of provision for children and young people with SEND.
- Develop a new school effectiveness approach with inclusion at the heart and seek to ensure that we reduce the number of exclusions and absence for children and young people with SEND, in-year placement changes and the number of children and young people with SEND in Pupil Referral Units for lengthy periods of time. The provision of additional specialist places where needed will also support this approach.

- Improve the quality, impact, timeliness and suitability of SEN Support plans and education, health and care planning through the improvement of quality assurance arrangements. We will use the graduated response and annual reviews to help achieve this.
- Develop joint commissioning for children and young people with complex needs involving parents, carers, children and young people in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of services, for example, therapy provision and Children, Adolescent and Mental Health Services (CAMHS) through new commissioning team arrangements.
- Improve transition for young people and support them in preparing for adulthood. This will be in conjunction with investment into an all-age disability services being developed within the county council and with young people and partners.

The SEND consultation questionnaire asks you to think about these plans and say how far you agree or disagree with a number of statements about the proposals.

4. Improving policy and practice

Improve the quality of our practice with partners to improve the experience for children and young people with SEND and their families. We will:

- Improve practice and the level of skills and knowledge for all those working with children and young people with SEND. This will be developed through the newly established Children's Academy and by Teaching Schools and National Leaders of Education.
- Recommission a new outreach offer for mainstream schools through our Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units which will become hubs of excellence linked to early intervention and support.
- Review and streamline our processes and policies to improve management and coordination of area information and maximise the positive impact of digital technology.
- Improve the help, support and development for SENCos (Special Needs Co-ordinators within schools) through improved SENCo networks, training and development opportunities through the Children's Academy, sharing best practice and helpdesk arrangements.

The SEND consultation questionnaire asks you to think about these plans and say how far you agree or disagree with a number of statements about the proposals.

It also asks if you have any comments on any aspect of our draft strategy or any ideas for making SEND services more effective.

Thank you for taking time to read this strategy document and answering the SEND consultation questionnaire. Your views will be taken into account and will inform the development of the SEND strategy.